Introduction

The International Society to Improve the Use of Medicines (ISIUM) wants to bring renewed energy and relevance to the challenge of better use of medicines by:

- looking at issues in real life contexts from peoples’ perspectives,
- bringing together, and reflecting on, the best of previous and ongoing work in the field,
- going beyond the present limits of the production of knowledge,
- making independent questioning and critical thinking about medicines fun and popular,
- collaborating across disciplines, and
- making good work in the field visible and accessible.

What ISIUM does will distinguish it from other organisations. Therefore we should start in a realistic slow way, do what we undertake well, whilst being careful not to give the impression that we are stronger than we are.

Stage 1 is to build the basic hub of ISIUM as a useful connector of people and resources, and making a small contribution to the field of better use of medicines.

Stage 2 is to explore and develop approaches to needs and controversial issues and actively advocate for, fertilise new ways, and support people and their work.
Stage 1: 2018 – 2019

The aim is to build the functions, credibility and visibility of ISIUM and better understand the issues, needs and contexts of people in developing an agenda to fertilise actions for better use of medicines around the world. There are four interlinked areas:

1. **Mobilise members** interested in the general idea of ISIUM who are willing to get in on the ground floor and help us shape ISIUM and its work. This will involve communicating the existence of ISIUM and why we are setting it up, and providing a means for students to be active with ISIUM.

2. **Make ISIUM’s hub functional** will involve populating the current website with content, and optimising fully its current functionality to give access to information and facilitate exchange between members and interested people in conjunction with social media.

3. **Make a modest but valuable contribution to provoke debate on controversial issues, or explore significant challenges in the field of Medicines in Society.** By publishing one to two quality papers and co-convening or participating in one or two meetings, ISIUM will initiate its Think Tank and meeting/discussion forums using relatively informal processes amongst its members and the Board to survey issues and propose ideas.

4. **Mobilise resources** to the extent possible through donations or small grants, the volunteer labour of ISIUM members and in-kind contributions from supportive individuals and organisations. Harvest as many insights as possible from the needs, ideas and experience of members about working in the field and prepare ISIUM to move into the second stage of its development.
1. Mobilising members and communicating the existence of ISIUM

The main approach in this phase is to work with the network of contacts around Board and ISIUM members. Early stage members are likely to be those who already understand that it is valuable to link people in the medicines field together, share information and so on. They may be willing to help us do the work to develop ISIUM.

Making it easy for students and possibly those in non-Government organisations or not-for-profit organisations with few resources. We could offer free membership to them in return for projects or activity they do for ISIUM.

Mobilising members is linked to communicating the existence of ISIUM. Members may have opportunities to speak about ISIUM and why we feel the need to create such a society at meetings, events or such like over the coming year. The reactions/issues that come up in discussion will be valuable for getting our social media and website more lively as well as understanding how to develop our agenda to fertilise better use of medicines.

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<th>Tasks</th>
<th>Notes</th>
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<tr>
<td>Mobilise members and communicate the existence of ISIUM</td>
<td>Board members and members to provide the names of 5-10 people to be approached either directly by them, or on their behalf by Mary Hemming or Mary Murray</td>
<td>Indicate if they want Mary Hemming or Mary Murray to write on their behalf.</td>
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<td>Establish membership category for students and workers in low-resourced NGO/not-for-profit organisations where the fee is waived in return for work on ISIUM tasks or an interesting project. Create a means of operationalizing this.</td>
<td>Include this category on the membership form. How to operationalize this? Will this work best through particular members linked to academic institutions? Assess the workload in making it work.</td>
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<td>Members are asked to be proactive where they can and write a brief note/report on what they did, with photos if appropriate, and the questions or comments that came up.</td>
<td>Members share concepts of ISIUM at meetings/seminars and suitable occasions to help make the existence of the organization visible;</td>
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<td>Create a mechanism to receive and organise input from members on their activities in promoting ISIUM for upload to the website and/or the development of ISIUM’s agenda.</td>
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Target

By the end of 2019: xxx members
2. Building a hub to connect people and good work in the field of better use of medicines: the website and social media

The aim is to link people and their work and provide access to tools and interventions and experiences in improving the use of medicines that have been shown to work in various settings.

In stage 1 we will improve the existing website to the limit of its capability. It was built cheaply using open-source software as a temporary measure but its functionality is limited, e.g. it cannot accept payment, it does not support a protected area for members and there is no possibility for interactive data search. We can explore ways to increase its functions. It will be able to provide links to information useful for many kinds of work to improve understanding and use of medicines (a simple database), and to provide news of activities or a reflection corner under the heading presently called ‘blog’. Social media will help enliven communication.

Linking People: In this early stage, the ability to link members is limited and will have to occur by direct networking of the Board and members. This can be facilitated by the secretariat circulating to the Board and members, on a regular basis, the file of the Register of Members (list of members and their details).

| Activity                        | Tasks                                                                 | Notes                                                                 |
|---------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------|                                                                     |
| Improve current website         | a) Collect resources                                                  | a) The resources can be used to build a database that would enable users to access previous work in the field (e.g. ICIUM collection that might go up to around 2012?), and good quality more recent resources. The collection should include images and ideas to increase attractiveness and project the image of ISIUM. |
|                                 | Ask members to identify resources (content, its source and accessibility) and ask them to send resources (files and/or links and/or images we can use on the website) they think are valuable with a short description of each resource. |
|                                 | b) Create a mechanism to receive and organise information for the website. |
|                                 | c) Technical improvement and uploading to system.                      | b) A small group was formed at the AGM to take this forward (Mary Hemming (coordinator), Kathy Holloway, Kris Weerasuyria and Yong Kwok). Check whether this group is still happy to take on this task. Assess what this group will need in terms of members and resources to do the job, develop terms of reference etc. Kathy Holloway is following up how to link to previous work done in the field in the ICIUM collection. |
|                                 | Add content to the present website and initiate the functions it can manage. | c) Assess financial cost and the workload involved for ISIUM to manage this. |
|                                 | Find an IT coordinator/manager.                                         |                                                                     |
| Social media                    | Develop capability                                                     | What steps?                                                         |
| Linking people                  | Make information about current membership available to all members by circulating a file of current members and their interests to ISIUM members on a regular basis, e.g. every 3 to 6 months. | The current website does not support a password protected members’ area so the register cannot be published on the website until a more sophisticated website is built. |
| Learning and planning for second generation website and social media | Create a mechanism for reviewing experience with the first generation website and social media activity. Ask members to survey the websites of comparable types of organisations that work well and suggest (with an explanation) why certain features would be desirable. Prepare criteria and specifications for the desired functionality of website and social media. Hire competent professional help to design next generation website. | ISIUM to review experience in this first stage and to survey other similar easy to use websites to develop criteria to drive its redesign. ISIUM should take time to develop a really strong functional second generation website Assess financial cost and the workload involved for ISIUM to manage this. Need a mechanism and coordinator for this task. By when? |
3. Making a contribution to the field by initiating Think Tanks and discussion forums

The approach is to work in small achievable steps to make a contribution on key/controversial/sensitive topics in the field of improving the use of medicines and show what ISIUM can do. The aim is to publish 1 to 2 quality papers by the end of 2018.

A process has begun within the Board whereby after ad hoc discussion, members volunteered to make notes/write about ideas and issues each consider important. We have 6 short papers/notes with feedback from Board discussions. A wider process is proposed during Stage 1 to survey members to identify issues or propose ideas. ISIUM needs to identify and select topics on which to concentrate a collaborative effort on in 2018. ISIUM also needs to continue to develop other papers, on new topics or those already begun, that will stimulate discussion within ISIUM and enable it to develop a position on important issues, or convene forums to explore them further with wide perspectives. This will enable us to prepare for Stage 2: to know what issues we want to work on; how we want to develop/stimulate new ways of working for rational use of medicines; show our value; and set us up to build substantial relationships with other organisations. It will prepare us for more significant resource mobilization for the future, and to know what increased functionality we need for the website etc to link people, work and facilitate exchange.

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| Identification of controversial, sensitive issues or themes as topics for the preparation of high quality ISIUM papers, from which to develop Think Tank processes over time. | Organise a mechanism: to identify issues amongst members and their networks, develop a number of papers within ISIUM, prioritise 1 or 2 for publication. Develop a way of coordinating this activity by appointing a coordinator(s) either by employing someone, or asking for a volunteer, and/or set up a subcommittee. Develop terms of reference or guidelines for the process, propose a structure and a method to work. | Suggestions are:  
- ask members what they see as important current issues around the use of medicines at regional or global levels? What would be entry points for us? OR  
- look at potential areas within the current Essential Medicines Lists/guidelines etc.  
Do a quick topic survey around what are current understandings of medicines?  
Four possible ways of identifying topics:  
i) the Delphi method  
ii) create a ‘Alert Issues’ group – to identify topics and set them.  
iii) set a theme such as the methodology of interventions looking critically at research and impact.  
iv) have the author create a group around them to develop the paper – a group of experts with diverse perspectives; the author presents ideas and the group gives input. |  
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Future possibilities: The South Centre is holding a meeting on AMR in developing countries in Malaysia in 2018; Prince Mahidol Award Conference (PMAC) is held in Thailand every January.  
Niyada Kiatying-Angsulee, Mary Murray and Mary Hemming had a joint discussion with the Thai DNDC on ISIUM and other topics in rational use of medicines field in Bangkok on December 14, 2017.  
This was an example of open exploration of new ways of working, stimulating wider activities, and achieving a better understanding of themes relating to the use of medicines in diverse contexts. |
4. Resource mobilization and planning for stage 2 development

The aim is to mobilise resources of various kinds within the constraints ISUIM has in 2018 and to prepare an approach to resource mobilization for the next stage of ISUIM.

Financial: The most realistic source of financial resources in the short term is from member fees, small grants, and donations. One possible source of donations is from those sought and received under the Deductible Gift Recipient (DGR) status of ISUIM in Australia from people within Australia who can claim a tax deduction. Grant applications could be possible if a suitable organisation is identified who supports the general aim of ISUIM and wants to help it get off the ground.

Volunteers, in kind contributions: ISUIM Stage 1 activities described above will mostly depend on the collaborative work of members themselves using their knowledge of the field, where important resources and needs are, and convincing those who support our aims to help us with in-kind contributions.

Planning for stage 2: ISUIM needs to monitor and review its early stage work, dream and create a plan for resource mobilization to enable it to evolve in a sustainable way to its second and later stages.

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<td>Mobilise funding through donations</td>
<td>Instruct the lawyers to amend ISUIM’s constitution to include the new clause approved at the AGM; this will enable ISUIM to claim Deductible Gift Recipient (DGR) status. Publicise ISUIM’s DGR status by using the official Charity Tick artwork on the ISUIM website, and on documents and emails. Ask Australian Board members and members to do what they can within their time constraints, to seek donations (in accordance with ISUIM conflict of interest guidelines) through their network of contacts.</td>
<td>The DGR status means that Australian taxpayers can claim donations to ISUIM as a tax deduction.</td>
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<td>Mobilise funding through grants</td>
<td>Ask ISUIM members to do what they can to identify potential sources of grants, e.g. suitable foundations. Create a mechanism for internal review of grant applications written by members?</td>
<td>Some members have volunteered to identify funding organisations with a fit to ISUIM’s goals that may be open to a grant application from ISUIM.</td>
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<td>A budget for Stage 1</td>
<td>Prepare a notional budget for Stage 1 (for Board approval)</td>
<td>A budget is needed to guide the appropriate use of resources that might be mobilised – financial and volunteer work?</td>
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<td>Resource planning for future</td>
<td>Establish a Resource Mobilisation Sub-committee of the Board with terms of reference to make a plan for development of the future stages of ISUIM.</td>
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Stage 2: 2019 and beyond
Learning, promoting and fertilising many effective ways to work and support people in their work towards better use of medicines in many contexts. (Moving to this phase depends on whether there is significant buy-in by members as volunteers and financial donations)

1. Expand membership more widely and diversely.
2. Build relationships with other groups in the field around shared agendas.
3. Increase ISIUM’s ability to connect people and work in the field: second generation website and social media activity.
4. Wider resource mobilization; establish basic secretariat structure?
5. Focus Think Tank around key identified issues in the field; initiate well planned discussion forums of ISIUM around new ways of knowing and working towards better use of medicines in society.